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ABSTRACT

An April 2000 telephone survey queried a nationwide sample of 1,000 adults, including 283 parents of children ages 5 to 17 years, concerning school violence and other issues in the news. The vast majority of those surveyed said they believe it is the responsibility of parents to ensure that school shootings, such as occurred at Columbine High School, are not repeated. Approximately 70 percent of parents said that the Columbine violence has had some impact on their feelings about the safety of their children at school. Eighty-five percent of adults placed the responsibility for preventing future school violence incidents in the hands of parents. Attitudes on gun control remained unchanged from a year earlier, with 66 percent saying that controlling gun ownership was more important than protecting Americans' rights to own guns. Gender and political party differences remain. The majority indicated that more jobs and community programs for young people would reduce violent crime and that it is more important to enforce existing gun laws than to enact new statutes. Sixty percent said they believe that paying more attention to children with antisocial attitudes would be more effective than increasing school security, passing stricter gun control laws, or reducing violence in popular entertainment. Parents are split on what they think is the main reason youth commit violent acts, with about one-third each stating that parental upbringing or media violence is at fault. (A tabulation of survey responses for each question is attached.) (KB)

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THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER
For The People & The Press

A Year After Columbine
Public Looks to Parents More Than Schools to Prevent Violence

A year after the massacre at Colorado's Columbine High School, the vast majority of the public believes it is the responsibility of parents to ensure that such tragedies are not repeated. In fact, a plurality identifies poor parenting -- not peer pressure or violence in the media -- as the primary cause for school shootings, like the one at Columbine. Americans continue to support gun control, with nearly two-thirds saying such restrictions are more important than the rights of gun owners. But tougher gun laws are not regarded as a panacea, and just 6% believe such laws would prevent a recurrence of incidents like the one at Columbine.

The shootings at that suburban Denver high school continue to shape the way parents and non-parents alike view the issue of school violence. About seven-in-ten (71%) parents say the violence at Columbine has had at least some impact on their feelings about the safety of their children at school. And whether or not they have children, Americans overwhelmingly agree that parents are best able to prevent future Columbines. More than eight-in-ten (85%) place this responsibility on the shoulders of parents, against just 9% who say it rests with the schools.

Overall, parents express concern about their children's safety at school. Only 40% believe their children are *very* safe at school, and more than one-third (37%) say schools that their children attend have upgraded security in the past year. Fully 17% of parents report there have been serious threats of violence at those schools.

The latest Pew Research Center survey of 1,000 adults, including 283 parents, found that attitudes on gun control have generally remained unchanged in the year since the Columbine violence. By a solid 66%-to-29% majority, the public says controlling gun ownership is more important than protecting the right of Americans to own guns. This is similar to the 65% majority found in May 1999, in the immediate aftermath of Columbine. There also has been only slight movement on the question of whether to ban handguns. Currently, Americans are evenly split -- 47% favor such a ban and 47% are opposed. In May 1999, 44% supported the ban and 50% were opposed.

Opinions Divide on Gun Control

	Total %	Men %	Women %
Strong support for enforcement			
What's more important...			
Stricter enforcement	59	66	53
New gun laws	37	31	43
Don't know	4	3	4
	100	100	100
But stronger support for gun control			
What's more important...			
Gun control	66	59	73
Protecting owners' rights	29	36	22
Don't know	5	5	5
	100	100	100
*Little political advantage**			
Who better reflects your views...			
Republicans	30	32	28
Democrats	36	36	36
Both/Neither/DK	34	32	36
	100	100	100
Who would do best job...			
Gore	41	37	46
Bush	37	43	31
Neither/Don't know	22	20	23
	100	100	100

* These figures are from the April survey; all others are from March.

It is clear that for many Americans gun control is but one remedy -- and perhaps not even the most effective remedy -- for preventing violence. While 41% believe that stricter gun laws would reduce

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violent crime by a great deal, 63% say that more jobs and community programs for young people would accomplish that objective. And a majority of the public (59%) says it is more important to enforce *existing* gun laws than to enact new statutes aimed at restricting weapons sales and improving gun safety.

The public's ambivalence on gun-related questions is reflected in divisions over which party is better suited to handle this issue. Overall, Democrats hold a slight 36%-30% lead as doing a better job on gun control, but more than one-third of the public (34%) has no preference. The Democrats' advantage on this issue has not changed significantly since last June, when they held a 42%-34% lead.

More Scrutiny of Troubled Youth

Asked about specific remedies for school violence, many Americans say more attention should be paid to children with anti-social attitudes. Fully six-in-ten believe that giving such children closer scrutiny would be more of an effective way to prevent shooting incidents than increasing school security (11%), passing stricter gun control laws (6%) or reducing violence in popular entertainment (13%).

Support for greater vigilance of this sort has grown in the past year; in April 1999, shortly after the Columbine incident, 49% endorsed paying more attention to kids' anti-social attitudes and behaviors, 21% cited increasing school security, and 11% cited passing stricter gun control laws.

Attitudes have also changed in the last year on why such violent incidents occur. More than four in ten (42%) lay the blame on parents, compared to 36% in April 1999. One-quarter of the public (26%) cites violence in the media that children are exposed to, a decrease of eight percentage points from April 1999.

Overall, parents are split on what *they* think is the main reason why kids commit such violent acts -- 35% think it is poor upbringing by parents, and 33% say it is the violence in the media that children are exposed to. Mothers and fathers also differ on this issue. Almost half of the fathers surveyed (46%) cite poor upbringing, compared to only one quarter (25%) of mothers. More than four-in-ten of the mothers (41%), on the other hand, point the finger at violence in the media. Relatively few parents attribute acts of violence to peer pressure (15%) or genetic or biological tendencies toward violence (3%).

Why Kids Commit Violence

Main reasons	Total %	Moms %	Dads %
Poor upbringing	42	25	46
Violence in media	26	41	24
Peer pressure	14	16	15
Genetic / biological tendencies	4	4	2
Other	7	7	7
Don't know	7	7	6
	100	100	100

The effects of Columbine are still being felt by parents and children in a number of ways. Only 40% of parents think their child is very safe at school, while five out of ten parents think their child is somewhat safe. One-third (34%) of parents say their child seems concerned about personal safety at school. More parents of schoolchildren age 12 to 17 (45%) report their child being concerned than do parents of schoolchildren age five to 11 (26%). Similarly, more parents of older children (25%) also report that they've heard of serious threats of violence involving children at their child's school, compared to only 10% of parents with younger children.

Almost four-in-ten parents (37%) report that their child's school has taken measures to ensure safety in the past year, like installing metal detectors, closed circuit TV cameras or hiring police or security guards. More parents of children age 12 to 17 say this occurs than parents of children age five to 11 (44%-30%).

The school shootings remain an important topic of conversation between parents and children. More than three-quarters (77%) of all parents and 85% of parents of children age 12-17 say they have had at least some discussion about school shootings with their children. In contrast, 41% of

all parents have talked to their children about the case of Elian Gonzalez, the 6-year-old Cuban boy at the center of an international custody battle, and 33% have discussed the 2000 presidential election campaign.

Gender Gap Remains

While support for gun control is strong across all major demographic groups, a gender gap persists on this issue. Women favor controlling gun ownership over protecting the rights of gun owners by an overwhelming 73%-to-22% margin. On balance, men share this view, though by a narrower margin -- 59%-36%. The partisan divide is even more pronounced. A 77% majority of Democrats back gun control, compared to a bare majority (55%) of Republicans.

Voters are less inclined this year than last to punish members of Congress who oppose gun control. In July 1999, fully 55% said a member of Congress who voted against gun control should *not* be reelected, while 35% said such a member would deserve reelection. Today the voting public is much more evenly divided: 41% say members who oppose gun control should not be returned to office vs. 44% who say they should be reelected. The shift in opinion has been particularly sharp among women and Democrats.

Gun Control and Congress*

	If a member opposes gun control DON'T reelect	
	July 99	April 00
	%	%
Men	50	43
Women	**60**	**39**
Republican	38	26
Democrat	**69**	**48**
Independent	59	45

* Based on registered voters.

The fact remains, however, that a vote *in favor* of gun control is a political plus for many members of Congress. Fully 60% of voters say that a lawmaker who backed gun control should be reelected, down slightly from the 69% who held this view last year. Only 25% say a member who has supported gun control shouldn't be returned to office.

Heading into the 2000 elections, it is unclear at this point which political party -- or presidential candidate -- has the upper hand on the question of gun control. The Democrats maintain a slight edge, along with Al Gore. In a Pew survey released last month, 41% said the vice president could do a better job representing their views on gun control, 37% chose George W. Bush.

Opinion about the role of the National Rifle Association is largely unchanged in recent years. A plurality of Americans (42%) say the NRA has too much influence over gun control laws in this country, 17% say the organization has too little influence, and 28% say its influence is about right. Similarly, in December 1993, 45% said the NRA was too influential, 15% said it had too little influence and 27% thought it had about the right amount of influence over gun laws.

In a similar vein, the percentage of Americans who believe that more gun restrictions will help reduce violent crime in this country has not increased significantly in recent years. And the public places more faith in several other potential solutions. Roughly four-in-ten Americans (41%) say stricter gun control laws would reduce violent crime "a lot," similar to the 39% who held this view in March 1994. More jobs and community programs for young people is a much more popular approach. Longer jail terms for violent criminals, as well as restrictions on the amount of violence shown on TV are endorsed by about half of the public (49% and 48%, respectively). Nearly as many (46%) say more police on the streets would help reduce violent crime.

Ways to Reduce Violent Crime

	Would reduce crime...			
	A lot	A Little	Not At All	Don't Know
	%	%	%	%
Jobs and community programs for youth	63	29	7	1=100
Longer jail terms	49	33	15	3=100
Less violence on TV	48	37	14	1=100
More police	46	45	7	2=100
Stricter gun laws	41	33	24	2=100

Gonzalez Case Top Story

The long-running saga of Elian Gonzalez was once again the month's top news story. Interest in this story has slipped slightly from January (39% following very closely) and February (37%), when it also led the monthly news indexes.

The stock market's recent convulsions were closely followed by about one-in-five (19%) Americans. Surprisingly, interest in this story did not increase following the sharp declines April 14 in both the Dow Jones industrial average and the NASDAQ composite index. Those who were interviewed *before* the market plunge tuned in at about the same rate as those who were surveyed from April 14-16.

With the presidential primary season over, fewer Americans paid close attention to coverage of the campaign. Overall, about 18% say they followed election news very closely, down from 26% in both March and February. More Republicans (25%) showed strong interest than either Democrats (18%) or independents (13%).

The recent court ruling against the software company Microsoft failed to garner much attention. Just 13% say they paid very close attention to the judge's decision in the high-profile case, about the same who followed progress of the antitrust trial in December 1999 (11%) and November 1998 (12%).

ABOUT THIS SURVEY

Results for the *April* survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates among a nationwide sample of 1,000 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period April 12-16, 2000. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus 4 percentage points. For results based on either Form 1 (N=500) or Form 2 (N=500), the sampling error is plus or minus 5 percentage points. For results based on parents (N=283), the sampling error is plus or minus 7 percentage points.

Results for the *March* survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates among a nationwide sample of 1,184 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period March 15-19, 2000. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus 3.5 percentage points.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
APRIL 2000 NEWS INTEREST INDEX
FINAL TOPLINE
April 12 - 16, 2000
N=1,000 / Parents of Children Age 5-17 =283

Q.1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Bill Clinton is handling his job as President? [IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the way Bill Clinton is handling his job as President? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]

	Approve	Disapprove	Don't Know
April, 2000	57	31	12=100
March, 2000	57	35	8=100
February, 2000	58	33	9=100
January, 2000	56	35	9=100
December, 1999	55	35	10=100
October, 1999	59	34	7=100
Late September, 1999	59	33	8=100
September, 1999	56	36	8=100
July, 1999	58	31	11=100

June, 1999	55	35	10=100
May, 1999	56	34	10=100
April, 1999	56	38	6=100
March, 1999	62	31	7=100
February, 1999	64	30	6=100
Mid-January, 1999	66	29	5=100
January, 1999	63	30	7=100
Late December, 1998	71	27	2=100
Early December, 1998	61	32	7=100
November, 1998	65	29	6=100
September 21-22, 1998	62	33	5=100
September 19-20, 1998	55	36	9=100
Early September, 1998	61	33	6=100
Late August, 1998	62	32	6=100
Early August, 1998	63	28	9=100
June, 1998	59	32	9=100
May, 1998	62	28	10=100
April, 1998	62	28	10=100
March, 1998	65	26	9=100
Early February, 1998	71	26	3=100
January, 1998	61	30	9=100
November, 1997	58	31	11=100
September, 1997	58	29	13=100
August, 1997	59	32	9=100
June, 1997	54	34	12=100
May, 1997	57	34	9=100
April, 1997	55	34	11=100
February, 1997	60	32	8=100
Early February, 1997	57	30	13=100
January, 1997	59	31	10=100
November, 1996	57	34	9=100
July, 1996	54	38	8=100
June, 1996	54	38	8=100
April, 1996	53	39	8=100
March, 1996	55	38	7=100
February, 1996	51	39	10=100
January, 1996	50	43	7=100
October, 1995	48	42	10=100
September, 1995	45	42	13=100
August, 1995	44	44	12=100
June, 1995	50	40	10=100
April, 1995	47	43	10=100
March, 1995	44	44	12=100
February, 1995	44	44	12=100
December, 1994	41	47	12=100
November, 1994	48	40	12=100
October, 1994	41	47	12=100
Early October, 1994	38	47	15=100
September, 1994	41	52	7=100
July, 1994	45	46	9=100
June, 1994	42	44	14=100
May, 1994	46	42	12=100
March, 1994	45	42	13=100
January, 1994	51	35	14=100
Early January, 1994	48	35	17=100
December, 1993	48	36	16=100
October, 1993	44	42	14=100
September, 1993	49	35	16=100
Early September, 1993	43	43	14=100
August, 1993	39	46	15=100
May, 1993	39	43	18=100
Early May, 1993	45	37	18=100
April, 1993	49	29	22=100
February, 1993	56	25	19=100

Q.2 Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely?
[INSERT ITEM; ROTATE]

	Very Closely	Fairly Closely	Not too Closely	Not at all Closely	(VOL) DK
a. News about candidates for the 2000 presidential election	18	39	22	20	1=100
March, 2000	26	41	19	13	1=100
February, 2000	26	36	21	17	*=100
January, 2000	19	34	28	18	1=100
December, 1999	16	36	24	23	1=100
October, 1999	17	32	28	22	1=100
September, 1999	15	31	33	20	1=100
July, 1999	15	38	24	22	1=100
June, 1999	11	25	29	34	1=100
b. The court ruling that the computer software company Microsoft was guilty of unfair business practices	13	33	24	29	1=100
December, 1999	11	31	29	28	1=100
November, 1998	12	20	31	36	1=100
c. The debate over whether 6-year-old Elian Gonzalez should be returned to his father in Cuba	33	38	16	11	2=100
February, 2000	37	41	15	6	1=100
January, 2000	39	38	14	8	1=100
d. Recent major ups and downs in the U.S. stock market	19	29	20	32	*=100
March, 2000	23	29	21	26	1=100
March, 1999	18	29	22	31	*=100
January, 1999	24	28	19	28	1=100
Early September, 1998	32	31	20	17	*=100
Mid-August, 1998	17	23	21	39	*=100
January, 1998	21	25	23	31	*=100
November, 1997	25	36	18	20	1=100
September, 1997	14	22	23	40	1=100
April, 1997	17	21	22	40	*=100
February, 1996	12	20	25	42	1=100

On another subject...
ROTATE Q.3/4, Q.5/6 IN BLOCKS:
ASK FORM 1 ONLY:
Q.3F1 Suppose a member of Congress voted FOR impeaching and trying President Clinton. Do you think this member should be re-elected, or not?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=358]:

	July 1999
49 Should be	57
33 Shouldn't be	31
18 Don't know/Refused	12
100	100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY:
Q.4F2 Suppose a member of Congress voted AGAINST impeaching and trying President Clinton. Do you think this member should be re-elected, or not?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=358]:

	July 1999
48 Should be	52
32 Shouldn't be	38
20 Don't know/Refused	10
100	100

ASK FORM 1 ONLY:
Q.5F1 Suppose a member of Congress voted AGAINST gun control. Do you think this member should be re-elected, or not?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=358]:

	July 1999
44 Should be	35

41	Shouldn't be	55
15	Don't know/Refused	10
100		100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY:
Q.6F2 Suppose a member of Congress voted FOR gun control. Do you think this member should be re-elected, or not?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=358]:

		July 1999
60	Should be	69
25	Shouldn't be	25
15	Don't know/Refused	6
100		100

[NO Q.7/Q.8]

ASK ALL:
Q.9 Please tell me if you think the REPUBLICAN Party or the DEMOCRATIC Party could do a better job of reflecting your views about gun control?

		June 1999	Dec 1993
30	Republican Party	34	32
36	Democratic Party	42	42
4	Both equally (VOL.)	4	--
7	Neither (VOL.)	8	8
23	Don't know/Refused	12	18
100		100	100

Q.10 Now, I am going to read you some things that might be done to reduce violent crime in this country. As I read each one, please tell me if you think it would reduce the amount of violent crime a lot, a little or not at all? Do you think [ROTATE ITEMS] would reduce the amount of violent crime a lot, a little, or not at all?

FORM 1 [N=500]; FORM 2 [N=500]:	A Lot	A Little	Not At All	Don't Know
a.F1 Stricter gun control laws	41	33	24	2=100
March, 1994	39	28	31	2=100
December, 1993	41	32	26	1=100
b.F2 More police on the streets	46	45	7	2=100
March, 1994	57	36	6	1=100
December, 1993	53	38	7	2=100
c.F1 More job and community programs for young people	63	29	7	1=100
d.F2 Restrictions on the amount of violence shown on TV	48	37	14	1=100
March, 1994	43	40	16	1=100
December, 1993	49	36	14	1=100
e.F1 Longer jail terms for those convicted of violent crimes	49	33	15	3=100
March, 1994	69	23	7	1=100
December, 1993	63	23	11	3=100

ASK ALL:
Q.12 Do you think the National Rifle Association has too much influence, too little influence or, the right amount of influence over gun control laws in this country?

		Dec 1993	Time/CNN Aug 1993
42	Too much	45	39
17	Too little	15	15
28	Right amount	27	33
13	Don't know/Refused	13	13
100		100	100

Q.13 In general, how safe would you say you and your family are from crime at each of the following locations? (First/How about)... (READ AND ROTATE) are you and your family very safe, somewhat safe, not too safe or not at all safe from crime?

	Very Safe	Some-what Safe	Not Too Safe	Not At All Safe	(VOL.) Does Not Apply	Don't Know/ Refused	
a. At home at night	67	28	4	1	0	*=100	
Pew Center: October, 1999	67	29	2	1	0	1=100	
b. When walking in your neighborhood after dark	49	33	8	5	4	1=100	
Pew Center: October, 1999	41	39	8	5	6	1=100	
c. When at a shopping mall at night	22	49	16	6	6	1=100	
Pew Center: October, 1999	22	48	14	5	10	1=100	
d. At school	33	36	9	3	17	2=100	
Pew Center: October, 1999	35	38	8	3	16	1=100	

Q.18 THRU Q.20 BASED ON PARENTS OF CHILDREN AGE 5-17: [N=283]
Q.18 I am going to read a list of things that have been in the news recently. For each, please tell me how much, if at all, you have talked about it with this child. First, how much have you talked about (INSERT ITEM; ROTATE)... a lot, some, not too much, or not at all? What about...

	A Lot	Some	Not too Much	Not At All	DK/ Ref	
a The 2000 presidential election campaign	7	26	19	47	1=100	
b The debate over whether 6-year-old Elian Gonzalez should be returned to his father in Cuba	10	31	17	42	*=100	
c. The shootings that have occurred at schools across the country	45	32	13	10	*=100	
Child: 5-11	34	35	18	13	0=100	
Child: 12-17	56	29	8	6	1=100	
September, 1998 (Parents of children 8-17)	41	40	11	8	0=100	
Child: 8-10	30	43	13	14	0=100	
Child: 11-13	47	37	9	7	0=100	
Child: 14-17	47	40	9	4	0=100	

Q.19 Thinking about your child's personal safety at school, do you think your child is very safe at school, somewhat safe, not too safe or not at all safe?

40 Very safe
50 Somewhat safe
6 Not too safe
2 Not at all safe
* Child not in school (VOL.) SKIP TO Q.24
1 Don't know/Refused
100

Q.20 How concerned, if at all, does your child seem about (his/ her) personal safety at school very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned or not at all concerned?

12 Very concerned
22 Somewhat concerned
27 Not too concerned
37 Not at all concerned
2 Child not in school (VOL.) SKIP TO Q.24
0 Don't know/Refused
100

Q.21 THRU Q.23 BASED ON PARENTS OF CHILDREN AGE 5-17 WHO ATTEND SCHOOL: [N=278]
Q.21 To your knowledge have there been any serious threats of violence involving children at your child's school?

17	Yes
81	No
2	Don't know/Refused
100	

Q.22 How much, if it all, did the Columbine shooting last year change your views about how safe your child is at school? Did your views change a lot, some, only a little or not at all?

44	A lot
27	Some
17	Only a little
12	Not at all
*	Don't know/Refused
100	

Q.23 Do you happen to know if your child's school has taken any measures to ensure safety in the past year, such as installing metal detectors, closed circuit TV cameras, or hiring police or security guards?

37	Yes
53	No
10	Don't know/Refused
100	

ASK ALL:
Q.24 Now I have some questions about the recent school shootings like the one at Columbine High school in Colorado...In general, what do you think is the MAIN reason why kids commit such violence? (READ)

		Newsweek April 1999
4	Genetic or biological tendencies toward violence	5
42	Poor upbringing from parents	36
26	Violence in the media they are exposed to	34
14	Peer pressure from other kids	15
7	Other (VOL.)	7
7	Don't know/Refused	3
100		100

Q.25 Which ONE of the following do you think is the most effective way to prevent such things from happening?... (READ and ROTATE)

		Newsweek April 1999
11	Increasing school security, such as installing metal detectors and hiring more guards	21
6	Passing stricter gun control laws	11
60	Paying more attention to kids' anti-social attitudes and behaviors	49
13	Reducing violence in popular entertainment	14
6	Other (VOL.)	3
4	Don't know/Refused	2
100		100

Q.26 In the end, who's mostly responsible for ensuring that children don't commit violent acts at school...Is it mostly the schools' responsibility or mostly the parents' responsibility?

9	School responsibility
85	Parent responsibility
3	Other
3	Don't know/Refused
100	

ON ANOTHER SUBJECT ...
Q.27 In the past 12 months, have you or your family, or has someone else in your neighborhood... (INSERT ITEM; ROTATE ORDER.)?

	Yes, Self Or Family	Yes, Someone Else In Neighborhood	No	DK/Ref
a. Had money or property stolen	11	12	76	1=100
June, 1997	14	20	64	2=100
March, 1994	16	22	61	1=100
b. Been physically assaulted or mugged	2	4	93	*=100
June, 1997	4	8	87	1=100
March, 1994	5	8	86	1=100

Q.28 Do you happen to have any guns or revolvers in your home?
Q.28a Is it, or are they, handguns, rifles, shotguns, or what? [ENTER ALL THAT APPLY]

		June 1997	Dec 1993
35	Yes, have guns or revolvers in home	40	45
21	Handgun	n/a	24
21	Rifle	n/a	31
18	Shotgun	n/a	27
2	Other	n/a	3
1	Don't know/Refused/No More Apply	n/a	2
62	No, does not have guns or revolvers in home	57	53
3	Don't know/Refused	3	2
100		100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
MARCH 2000 NEWS INTEREST INDEX
FINAL TOPLINE
March 15-19, 2000
N=1,184

On another subject...
Q.36 Would you favor or oppose a law that banned the sale of handguns?

		Sept 1999	May 1999	Dec 1993
47	Favor	46	44	45
47	Oppose	50	50	51
6	Don't know/Refused	4	6	4
100		100	100	100

Q.37 What do you think is more important to protect the right of Americans to own guns, OR to control gun ownership?

		June 1999	May 1999	Dec 1993
29	Protect right of Americans to own guns	33	30	34
66	Control gun ownership	62	65	57
5	Don't know/Refused	5	5	9
100		100	100	100

Q.38 Which do you think is more important... (READ; ROTATE)

59 More strictly enforcing current gun laws and punishing people who break them
OR
37 Passing new laws to increase gun safety and further restrict the sale of guns
4 Don't know/Refused
100